

Formation of Youth Groups Concerned about Stunting and Prevention of Early Marriage

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Abstract

Information obtained from BPS Bengkulu Province (2018), Seluma Regency with the highest percentage of early marriage cases was found to be 30.83 percent. The cause of the high rate of early marriage is the lack of economic problems, followed by the influence of peers, family, and pregnancy out of wedlock. The purpose of this service is to increase the knowledge of the adolescent community about stunting and early marriage. The methods used in this service activity are pre-test, counseling, and post-test methods. The instruments used in this activity are questionnaire sheets and leaflet sheets. The result obtained from this service activity is an increase in knowledge of youth groups in Tumbuan Village, Lubuk Sandi District, Seluma Regency with an average increase of 5.6%. So it can be concluded that adolescent knowledge related to stunting and early marriage is increasing and involving adolescents in stunting prevention efforts and early marriage is the right choice.

A. Introduction

Stunting is a condition in which toddlers have less length or height compared to age (Sumiati et al., 2020). Children are classified as stunting if their body length or height is below minus two standard deviations (-2SD) of children their age based on child growth standards from WHO (Asif et al., 2022; Santos et al., 2020). Stunting not only causes obstacles to children's physical growth, but also hinders cognitive development which can affect their intelligence level and productivity in the future. Stunting includes chronic nutritional problems caused by many factors such as socio-economic, maternal nutrition during pregnancy, infant pain and lack of nutritional intake in infants (Raiten & Bremer, 2020). According to the Indonesian Ministry of Health, the impact of stunting on children when the child develops into adulthood, among others, can reduce intelligence and vulnerability to disease. Previous studies have also shown that the condition of stunted children is associated with inhibition of mental and motor development (Atmarita et al., 2015).

Stunting is also closely related to early marriage, pregnancy and childbirth in adolescence (Taufikurrahman et al., 2023). The health and nutritional condition of the mother before and during pregnancy and after childbirth affects fetal growth and the risk of stunting. Other factors in mothers that affect the incidence of stunting are maternal posture (short), pregnancy distance that is too close, mothers who are still teenagers, and insufficient nutritional intake during pregnancy (Yuindra et al., 2022). The incidence of pregnancy and childbirth in adolescence is a risky condition. Gestational age of mothers who are too young (under 20 years) are at risk of giving birth to babies with low birth weight (BBLR). BBLR babies affect about 20% of *stunting* (Putri et al., 2019).

Pregnancy at a young age is at risk of death in mother and baby (Correa-De-Araujo & Yoon, 2021; Glick et al., 2021). Teenage pregnancy poses very complex problems both physical, psychological, economic and social. Physical problems that arise due to pregnancy in adolescents are anemia, fetal growth disorders in the womb, the risk of premature partus, the risk of abortion and the occurrence of preeclampsia. All of these problems are at risk of causing maternal death. Childbirth in mothers aged less than 20 years has

contributed to high maternal, neonatal, infant, and toddler mortality rates, which are higher than those of mothers aged 20-39 years. Young marriage or early marriage can have a negative impact on the health of mothers and toddlers, one of which is due to unpreparedness and disruption of reproductive organs in mothers at a young age and is included in the category of high-risk pregnancy (Dewi et al., 2023). Some factors that influence the incidence of early marriage are poverty, and education, so there is a lonely impression that marriage can protect girls, the good name of the family. Other things that can be contributing factors are the existence of social norms, religious laws that allow the practice of early marriage, and the country's legal system that regulates early marriage is not strong (Khaerani, 2019).

Based on data obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2020, the rate of early marriage in Indonesia in 2020 was 10.18%. This has decreased from 2019, which was 10.82%. While in Bengkulu Province, the incidence of early marriage touched 37.48%. Seluma Regency is one of the districts in Bengkulu Province with a fairly high rate of early marriage after Central Bengkulu regency, which is 45% in 2021 (Bappenas et al., 2020). The high rate of early marriage can be one of the factors causing stunting because it can cause problems with fetal growth and development during pregnancy (Suryadi et al., 2024).

According to research conducted by (Eliana et al., 2022) which states that stunting in Seluma Regency stunting incidence in Seluma Regency has decreased in line with the continued promotion of 8 integrated actions to reduce stunting. The incidence of stunting in 2020 was recorded at 6.4%, this decreased from 2019, which was 8.9%. However, Seluma district is still a priority locus (focus location) for stunting reduction in Bengkulu Province, which continues to be the government's focus in solving stunting problems. Lubuk Sandi District is one of the sub-districts in Seluma Regency that holds one stunting and is one of the stunting loci in Seluma Regency.

Improving the quality of adolescents through fostering resilience and family welfare by BKKBN. To carry out the mandate of the law, and respond to the problems of adolescents, BKKBN developed the Generation Planning Program (GenRe) for adolescents and families with adolescents (Ul'haq, 2021). Adolescents according to the World Health Organization (2018) are young people aged between 10 to 19 years. Adolescence is a transitional period from early childhood to early adulthood (Ayu et al., 2020). The number of adolescents in Indonesia continues to increase from year to year. A very prominent development that occurs in adolescence is the achievement of independence and identity (increasingly logical, abstract, and idealistic thinking) and spending more time outside the family (Diananda, 2019).

Adolescents during their development are faced with demands that are often contradictory, both from parents, teachers, peers, and the surrounding community. So they are also often faced with various opportunities and choices, all of which can cause problems for them (Rahmadhani & Asti, 2020). These risks are free sex, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases (PMS), HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, and limited access to information and health services. Negative peer association, opportunities for premarital sex, lack of knowledge about reproductive health and teenage pregnancy, are risk factors for adolescent pregnancy (Govender et al., 2019). Based on this situation, it is necessary to conduct health education for adolescents regarding Marriage Age Maturity (PUP), reproductive health and the relationship between stunting and early marriage. One of the health education that can be given to adolescents is through the formation of adolescent groups. The formation of adolescent groups is done to form a learning group for adolescents to obtain information related to health problems and is one of the most effective ways to help adolescent development.

Based on this fact, it is necessary to improve adolescent health through assistance in the formation of a stunting care adolescent group in Tumbuan Village, Lubuk Sandi District, Seluma Regency. This service aims "to increase the knowledge of the adolescent community about stunting and early marriage". Through this community service, he hopes to realize quality teenagers.

B. Research Methods

This community service activity will be carried out in January – October 2023. This service activity was carried out at the puskesmas of Tumbuan Village, Lubuk Sandi District, Seluma Regency. The steps used in community service activities are to identify problems, then proceed with socialization and signing of commitments to implement community service. The methods used in this community service activity are pre-test, counseling, post-test, and the formation of youth organizations. The instruments used in this service activity are in the form of questionnaire sheets and leaflets. This questionnaire sheet is used during the pre-test and post-test activity stages.

Service activities begin with the pre-test method which aims to determine the initial knowledge of adolescents about stunting and early marriage. After that, counseling on health education related to stunting and early marriage was given as well as leaflet distribution. After being given counseling, adolescents were given a post test which aimed to measure the increase in knowledge of stunting adolescents and early marriage after being given health education counseling. After the pre-test, counseling, and post-test activities are carried out, it will be continued by capturing teenagers in Tumbuan Village, Lubuk Sandi District, Seluma Regency as agents of change who have the ability as a group concerned about stunting and early marriage. After that, an organizational structure will be formed for teenagers, stunting and early marriage groups in coordination with Mr. and Mrs. Kadescc.

C. Results and Discussion

This community service activity will be carried out in January – October 2023. The steps of community service activities are problem identification, socialization and signing of commitments to the implementation of community service, providing pre-tests, providing health education about stunting and preventing early marriage, post tests, capturing adolescents in the puskesmas area of Lubuk Sandi District, forming a group of adolescents caring about stunting and preventing early marriage, the formation of an organizational structure of the adolescent group, and training of the youth group caring for stunting and prevention of early marriage. The weakness of this community service is still the lack of mothers participating in early detection of stunting and early marriage. The advantage obtained from this community service activity is the increase in knowledge of youth groups in Tumbuan Village, Lubuk Sandi District, Seluma Regency with an average increase of 5.6%. The increase in knowledge of the adolescent group can be seen from the results of the following average pre-test and post-test scores.

Table 1. Knowledge of Education participants about Stunting and Early Marriage

Knowledge Level	Pre-test Average Score	Post-test Average Score	Mean Difference
Correct Answer	90.4	96	5.6

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there is an increase in the average knowledge score of participants from measuring pre-test and post-test questionnaires, which shows a figure of 5.6%.

This community service activity was carried out by forming a Youth group. The formation and development of Youth groups must be carried out sustainably in Lubuk Sandi sub-district, Seluma Regency. The formation of the Youth group is designed as a joint effort in establishing close relationships and delivering information about stunting and early marriage that they should know together. Activities are managed based on the principle of, by, and for the teenagers themselves, as the ultimate goal is certainly to improve the quality of the next generation of the Indonesian nation itself. The benefits of Adolescent Groups can reduce the problem of Adolescent problems and help provide appropriate solutions to the obstacles faced. The results of this community service activity will be disseminated in the form of seminars and publications in community service journals. The following is documentation of community service activities.



Figure 1. Pretest Sheet Filling Activities



Figure 2. Material Extension Activities



Figure 3. Post Test Sheet Filling Activities

This devotion is in line with the devotion carried out by (Othman et al., 2021) entitled "Empowerment of Stunting Care Adolescents for the Knowledge and Attitudes of Young Women in Fe Tablet Supplementation at SMKN 12 Malang" which states that there is an increase in adolescents through the empowerment of stunting care adolescents, in this case it can be concluded that the empowerment of Stunting Care Adolescents affects the knowledge and attitudes of adolescent girls regarding Fe tablet supplementation at SMKN 12 Malang as a form of stunting prevention. In addition, this devotion is also in line with the devotion carried out by (Amalia et al., 2023) entitled "Formation of Adolescent Cadres Caring for Stunting in Efforts to Overcome Nutritional Problems in Toddlers" which states that involving adolescents in stunting prevention efforts and providing them with appropriate knowledge and training is a very important step in overcoming stunting problems in Botumoito Village.

D. Conclusion

This service activity shows that involving adolescents in stunting prevention efforts and early marriage by providing appropriate knowledge and training is a very good step in overcoming stunting and early marriage in Badanan Village, Lubuk Sandi District, Seluma Regency.

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